Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education  
CG-EDUC-626 Spiritual Development in Jewish Education  
Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Shire  
Spring 2015

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Course Scheduling:  
This course is being offered in two formats: online and on-campus this semester.

On-campus format: Classes will be held on Wednesdays 3.30-5.00pm.

Online format: Each week of online coursework will begin on Wednesday midnight e.s.t. I have found that this is the best time of the week to roll over to a new learning unit. Some units however will last two weeks with work to be done within that period.

Office Hours:  
I will be available on Monday afternoons e.s.t. for consultation, advice, discussion, etc., in person or via telecommunication. Please make an appointment by emailing me so that I can make time available for you.

Differentiated Learning:  
Hebrew College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate or complete course requirements, then he or she should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. For further information, see the Student Handbook at [http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf](http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf). If you require course accommodations because of a documented disability or an emergency medical condition, please email your instructor as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you on any issues you have to ensure that you can participate fully in the class and complete the course requirements. Please do not wait until the assignments are due for a retroactive accommodation, but discuss the situation with your instructor before you experience difficulty.

Essential Course Aims:  
Jewish education has been primarily concerned with the transmission of knowledge, acquisition of skills and developing Jewish identity in young people. However, many people wonder if any of this ‘sticks’ as a child grows up in a multi-cultural, multi-faith world. One aspect of cultivating religious identity has been missing from Jewish educational practice and that is nurturing the spiritual growth of the child. We seem to shy away from this practice in our schools and synagogues, often thinking that spiritual practice and a child’s being with God are not part of the Judaism we know. However, not only is nurturing spiritual practice part of the essence of Judaism, it has also been a long component of Jewish childhood but largely ignored in our times. This course seeks to explore the spiritual life of the child drawing upon the latest research and our own experience, offering a Jewish lens with which to view this spirituality that comes from our traditional sources and seeking to develop new practices for Jewish education in our classrooms, camps, synagogues, community centers that nurture the Jewish spiritual life of our children.
Learning Outcomes:
1. To locate Jewish education within the discipline of general religious education
2. To explore implications from Christian religious education for Jewish religious education
3. To critically understand and apply developmental theories of growth to religious education
4. To research the spirituality of children in the context of Jewish education
5. To generate teaching strategies for the nurture of the spiritual in Jewish education
6. To explore the sources of Jewish tradition for a nuanced understanding of children and childhood
7. To develop strategies for the teaching of Torah to enhance spiritual expression
8. To develop modes of curriculum for the enhancement of spiritual practice
9. To develop a personal theology of childhood

Required Reading:
- The majority of readings for the course will be available on-line or will be posted on Schoology. There will be required readings or chevruta study each week posted on schoology.
- These publications are essential reading and students may want to purchase them for future reference:

Overall Course Structure:
UNIT 1: Jewish Education as an applied practice of Religious Education
February 4th – February 25th
Guest Presenter: Professor Bob Pazmino, Professor of Religious Education, Andover Newton Theological School

Topics and Selected Readings:
1. Defining the Landscape
   - Brendan Hyde (2008), Children and Spirituality, Jessica Kingsley Publ., London. Chapters 1,2,3,4,10

2. Introduction to spiritual Education

3. Mapping Religious Education
   - Robert Pazmino (undated) Christian Education is more than Formation, manuscript.

UNIT 2: Spiritual Development: Theory to applied Practice
March 4th- April 1st
Guest Presenter: Jacquie Seberani –Kesner

Topics and Selected Readings:
1. Faith Development Theory
2. Application of Development Theories

3. Teaching pedagogies: Torah Godly Play

4. Musar
Marcia Plumb (2014), Musar as Spiritual Education, Reform Jewish Quarterly Spring 2014

5. Nurturing the creative disposition
Philip Kranz and Jeffrey Grossman (2008),Creativity and Judaism, Peach Point Publishing, Atlanta. Chapters 1,2.

APRIL 8-15 PESACH BREAK

UNIT 3: Child as Spiritual Learner
April 22nd - May 6th

Topics and Selected Readings

1. Research into the Spiritual Life of Children

2. Practice for the Spiritual Life of Children

3. Telling Torah
UNIT 4: Theology of Childhood  
May 13th - 20th

Topics and Selected Readings:
1. Biblical and Rabbinic Sources for a Jewish Theology of Childhood

2. Janucz Korczak and the Nature of Childhood

Assessments:
Assessment for this course is designed to assist the instructor gauge the depth of learning, level of contribution and ability for creative and imaginative play in theological education. Assessment is also designed to enable students to gauge their own ability to learn and therefore some assignments will be self and peer graded.

Assignments will include (assessed by student/peers):
- Faith development interview with a child and teen/adult
- Reflection on practice in teaching
- Havruta study
- Final Curriculum or conceptual project

Assessment will also be made on the following criteria (assessed by instructor):
- Contribution to discussion
- Creative and imaginative ability to play
- General depth of understanding and reading in the field
- Formative assessments
- Final curriculum project

The self/peer assessment and the instructor assessment will be equally weighted with 50% of the overall grade allocated to each.

Final project is due May 20th accompanied by reflective learning addendum and self and peer grading.